

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Policy, practice, process or service title:	SRUC PhD Programme, a/y 2023/24
Policy, practice, process or service lead/ owner:	Head of Doctoral College
Others involved in EqIA assessment group	Assessment group included: Head of Research, Head of Doctoral College, Associate Dean, Senior academic staff member, Current PGR student EDI Rep.
Policy, practice, process or service implementation date:	01/09/2023

1 Framing the policy, practice, process or service

1.1 Briefly describe the outcomes, aims and purpose of the policy, practice, process or service:

Academic programme at SQF level 12. The programme deliver postgraduate research (PGR) training at SRUC, with proposed validation by University of Edinburgh

1.2 Is the policy, practice, process or service new or being changed, reviewed or stopped?

New

1.3 Who is affected by this policy, practice, process or service?

Students and staff involved in the supervision and training of PGRs

1.4 Are there any other SRUC policies that may be affected by this policy, practice, process or service?

Associated policies to the PhD programme such as interruption to PGR studies, leave, maternity/paternity/parental leave for PGR students, hardship/discretionary funds for PhD, fees policies/practice, recruitment processes. Services that impact of the ability of the PGRs to progress including CES, IDS, libraries.

2 Evidence relevant to the policy, practice, process or service including consultation

The information you gather in this section will:

- help you to understand the importance of your policy, practice, process or service for different equality groups,
- inform the depth of equality impact assessment you need to do (this should be proportional to the potential impact on equality groups), and
- provide justification and an audit trail behind your decisions, including where it is agreed an equality impact assessment is not required.

2.1 Evidence: Set out in the table what you know about the experiences of people in terms of each equality group. Consider the diversity within each group (e.g. experiences of people from different religions or faiths) as well as the differences between groups. There may also be cumulative barriers experienced by people when you look at more than one group together (e.g. experiences of women of different minority ethnic groups, so the intersectional impact of sex and race).

You can add more rows to present the evidence if required.

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
Age	Expert group view and discussion SRUC own data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no age specific equality issues in the programme as proposed.

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was identified that PGR level training has entry requirements that are correlated to age (normally honours degree at least) but that is based on industry QA standards • Supervisors are normally allowed based on degree and experience. The SRUC supervisory policy allows for early career researchers and practitioners (e.g., Vet Services, Consultants) to be involved in PGR supervision to help gain experience. • SRUC plans to collect EDI data throughout the lifecycle and this will be monitored as part of the routine performance analysis of the programme.
Disability	Expert group view and discussion SRUC education manual Proposed PGR Degree Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interruptions (Section 21) – As proposed there is a requirement for evidence. Are all reasons for and/or interruption durations equal and does the evidence required block some students in applying for it? • Learning Adjustments Policy in the Education Manual allows for reasonable adjustments to support students' studies for all disability types including acquired or temporary disability. However, on a project-by-project basis there may be adjustments that cannot be enacted – this can be reviewed with potential candidate and project specifications. • Attendance (Section 13) – was commended by the group for allowing multiple types of engagement, including campus, field studies, virtual – depending on the requirements of the PGR candidate and the project requirements
Race	Expert group view and discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance (Section 13) – was commended by the group for allowing multiple types of engagement, including campus, field studies, virtual – depending on the requirements of the PGR candidate and the project requirements - Programme does not require any cultural knowledge and therefore no direct impact based on race

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
Sex	Expert group view and discussion SRUC data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current students do not have differing completion rates on sex
Gender Reassignment	Expert group view and discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interruption policy would include time for gender reassignment. - PhD Project level required to ensure project (and/or placement) facilities are not limiting undertaking the project. Project planning, risk assessment and SOPs and wider SRUC policy.
Sexual orientation	Expert group view and discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not relevant. Maybe some project and/or placement specific consideration but unknown at present and project SOPs and risk assessments
Religion or Belief	Expert group view and discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timings of mandatory training and conferences and assessments. - Ensure dietary provision and ensure all catered for - Project and/or placement specific work may limit candidates but this should be clear in individual project descriptions. RAs and SOPs for projects should be covered.
Pregnancy or maternity	Expert group view and discussion All parental policies for PGR SRUC data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project and/or placement specific RAs and adjustments should be in place. May be some project limitations that are time sensitive etc. but best efforts should be taken. - Programme core events to provide adjustments as required - Interruptions/maternity and parental policy in place and largely equivalent to staff - Supervisors leave allowed for change of supervisors during the period of parental leave for the supervisor. - Some anecdotal evidence of difficulties in returning to studies after long interruptions in terms of additional support being required (e.g., caring, part-time

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
		etc). However, ability to seek change from full to part time and seek additional support through learning adjustments to take account of status change.
Marriage or civil partnership	Expert group view and discussion	- Ensure staff policy is clear on the relationships between staff and students and other roles on progression and/or recruitment.

2.2 Consultation and stakeholder involvement: Speaking to people who will be affected by your policy, practice, process or service can help clarify the impact it will have on different equality groups. Describe below what you learned from the consultation/ involvement. Consultation can take time so make sure that you build this into your policy, practice, process or service review/ development timeline.

Note who you consulted with, when you consulted with them, and what they told you about the impact of your proposed policy, practice, process or service.

In the development of the programme various stakeholders were consulted including the Academic Liaison Manager's group who have oversight of student support at SRUC. In addition, students and supervisors were included in working groups and updates on programme development with opportunities to feed in. The PGR student EDI Rep was included in the EqIA group. Those consulted with were generally supportive as it builds on existing practice within SRUC. The development of the programme was seen as an opportunity to develop a more coordinated approach to PGR support which would have a positive impact.

2.3 Record here if you need to undertake a full equality impact assessment based on your evidence above.

Outcome of Step 2 following initial evidence gathering and relevance to equality characteristics	Yes/ No (Y or N)	Next steps
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There is no relevance to equality	N	Proceed to sign off (step 5) to agree with decision makers that no EqIA is required based on current evidence
There is relevance to some or all of the equality groups	Y	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA
It is unclear if there is relevance to some or all of the equality groups	N	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA

3 Impact on equality groups and changes to policy, practice, process or service

You must consider the three aims of the general duty for each protected characteristic. The following questions will help:

- **Is there potential for discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010?** How will this be mitigated?
- **Is there potential to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not?** How can this be achieved?
- **Is there potential for developing good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not?** How can this be achieved?

3.1 Does the policy, practice, process or service have any impacts (whether intended or unintended, positive or negative) on any of the equality characteristics? In the tables below, record the impact of the policy, practice, process or service, as it is planned or as it operates, might have on each equality characteristic and describe what changes in policy, practice, process or service or actions will be required to mitigate that impact or to take advantage of a positive impact.

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
Age	Potential for discrimination			X	For SRUC-funded studentships (not the programme itself), age markers are flagged for consideration to foster good relations and have potential positive impact on 30+ age group
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Disability	Potential for discrimination			X	<p>Ensure guidance on evidence required (separate to documentation) is commensurate to the type and length of leave in the interruption policy.</p> <p>Ensure guidance on evidence highlights that any documentation is confidential between the student and the Doctoral College</p> <p>Be clear on advertising (and induction) on the ability to adjust project in light of disability. Be clear on the essential requirements of applicants based on the project in case some situations cannot be adjusted for at a project level.</p> <p>Ensure the full range of support including, interruptions, learning adjustments and changes to mode of study (e.g. move to part time) are available including to those with acquired and temporary disabilities.</p>
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity		X		
	Potential to foster good relations		X		

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					Ensure steps are taken to enable students who are required to undertake a placement to do so. This could include a change of placement provider, location or other necessary adjustments.
Race	Potential for discrimination		X		Application information could potentially leave room for unconscious bias. However, there are entry criteria and the general admissions to the programme will be based on these criteria and programme fit, including contextual admissions via the personal statement and interview. To limit potential unconscious bias it is proposed that names and demographics are not included in funded studentship nominations. Funded SRUC studentships are also flagged for EDI data including BAME should there be equal scoring in shortlisting and interview.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Sex	Potential for discrimination			X	Already part of the guidance but ensure neutral language throughout PhD programme documents and advertising.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations		X		To explore the staff menopause policy and adjust for PhD Programme.

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					SRUC PGR student(s) inclusion in the Athena Swan developments
Gender Reassignment	Potential for discrimination			X	
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations			X	
Sexual orientation	Potential for discrimination			X	
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations			X	
Religion or Belief	Potential for discrimination		X		Ensure that timetabling of mandatory events, including social events and training do not occur at times of religious significance (e.g., Ramadan) and ensure dietary requirements are adhered to, consideration should also be given to the timings of any placements
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Pregnancy or maternity	Potential for discrimination			X	Ensure that students and supervisors are aware of relevant policies and adjustments that can be made (e.g., PGR parental leave policy, interruptions, ability to change mode of study to part-time, temporary adjustments to project etc). Ensure that there is flexibility with placements should this be required. Ensure that students are supported on return
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity		X		
	Potential to foster good relations			X	

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					from maternity leave with option to change mode of study available as required.
Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)	Potential for discrimination			X	
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations			X	

3.2 Think about and describe below how your assessment impacts on your policy, practice, process or service review or development timeline including but not limited to:

- Procurement criteria: do you need to include specific equality criteria as part of the technical specification ?
- Communication plan/ products: do you need to communicate with people affected by this policy, practice, process or service in a specific format (e.g. audio, subtitled video, different languages)?
- Cost: do you propose any actions because of this assessment which will incur additional cost?
- Resources: do the actions you propose require additional or specialist resource to deliver them?

This assessment does not impact on the timeline for the policy as the actions that need to be taken had already been considered and included. While there may not be any additional direct costs, additional resources in terms of staffing will be required for the programme to support concessions such as interruptions, extensions and changes to modes of study. Coordinated access to student support resources within faculties has been discussed and agreed with ALMs. Whether there are additional resources required or costs incurred to facilitate this will be reviewed once students are on programme and there is a clearer view of demand.

3.3 Record the outcome of this assessment below having considered the potential or actual impacts of your policy, practice, process or service on equality groups. Choose from one of the following (mark with an X or delete as appropriate):

Note: You must take action to remove barriers or take advantage of positive opportunities BEFORE the policy, practice, process or service goes live.

Please select (X)	Implications for the policy, practice, process or service
	No major change: Your assessment demonstrates that the policy, practice, process or service is robust. The evidence shows no potential for unlawful discrimination and that you have taken all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.
X	Adjust the policy, practice, process or service: You need to take steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality of to foster good relations. You have set actions to address this and have clear ways of monitoring the impact of the policy, practice, process or service when implemented.
	Continue the policy, practice, process or service: The policy, practice, process or service will continue despite the potential for adverse impact. You have justified this with this assessment and shown how this decision is compatible with our obligations under the public sector equality duty. When you believe any discrimination can be objectively justified you must record in this assessment what this is and how the decision was reached.
	Stop and remove the policy, practice, process or service: The policy, practice, process or service will not be implemented due to adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated.

4 Monitoring the policy, practice, process or service impact and further actions

It is important to continue to monitor the impact of your policy, practice, process or service on equality groups to ensure that your actual or likely impacts are those you recorded. Your monitoring information will also inform a future review of the policy, practice, process or service.

4.1 Record in the table below how you intend to monitor the impact of this policy, practice, process or service on equality groups. In the table below you should:

- list the relevant measures,
- Identify who or which team is responsible for implementing or monitoring any changes

- Where the measure will be reported to (e.g. committee, ELT, Board) and how often.

Measure	Lead department/ individual	Reporting (where/ frequency)
EDI data across the student lifecycle	Doctoral College and Committee	Doctoral College Committee/ annually

4.2 Record further actions or changes required after the policy, practice, process or service is implemented in the table below. Make it clear if there are no outstanding actions.

Action	Lead department/ individual	Action target date
Review guidance on recruitment including neutral language and explore best practice for blinding applications	Head of Doctoral College	1/9/2024

5 Sign off and future review

Equality impact assessments must be signed off by the relevant Head of Service/ Department, even where an EqIA is not required. Also note here when you plan to review the policy, practice, process or service and accompanying EqIA which should be no later than 5 years from policy, practice, process or service implementation.

5.1 Senior Responsible Owner/ Committee sign off.

Job/ Committee title: Head of Research

Date: 15/05/2023

5.2 Equality impact assessment review date.



Date: 01/09/2027

Important: You must send the final version of this equality impact assessment to:

- **the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Lead.**
- **the Communications team for publication on SRUC's equality page on the external website.**

Document control		
Document control:	V0.1	
Date policy, practice, process or service live from:	[DATE]	
Review/ Approval Group:	[project board if relevant or delete]	
Last reviewed:	Date	
Review cycle:	[No more than three years]	
Document change log		
Version/ Author	Date	Comment
V0.1		